

Editorial



Volume 13 of the *Journal* occasions a close examination of two main strands of enquiry. First the volume builds on longstanding trends advancing a more expansive understanding of heritage values and, consequently, a move toward more inclusive decision-making and resource management processes, engaging directly with the core of UNESCO's mandate, enshrining human rights at the heart of its heritage agenda. What one might call the 'genealogy' (or genealogies) of intangible cultural heritage forms the other line of interrogation where virtually all of the articles presented herein both pay obeisance to the historical origins of various forms of traditional cultural practice – food security and the clash between the maintenance of traditional agricultural/ fisheries practices in the face of modernisation or imposed (proto-colonial) land management procedures, the tension between formal religions and nature-based spiritual beliefs, the transformation and transmission of masked performance traditions, the consciousness of indigenous communities about the vulnerability of their traditional cultures and their growing determination to confront the misperceptions of these practices, the effect of war on displaced communities and the disenfranchisement of their cultural traditions, co-curatorship, museum collections management involving the community – they all give recognition to their evolution and transferral in the 21st century, an acknowledgement which would have been unheard of a decade ago.

The combination of these tropes of authority and authenticity has created an enabling ecology for the duality of the nature of heritage, which has been shaped by what the author of **Museums and Safeguarding ICH** refers to as *the paradigm shift from valuing monuments, sites, artefacts and other objects, to safeguarding a living heritage that is primarily located in the skills, knowledge and know-how of contemporary human beings*. In an authoritative overview of the democratisation processes being employed within museums, the article explores the delicate balance implied in empowering people, particularly those living in transient situations, through participation in, and the interpretation of their cultural heritage in museum based projects. The author provides the fundamental insight that *safeguarding ICH becomes a human rights-based activity in which not only are the wider cultural, economic and social rights of bearers to be protected, but also, and crucially, the procedural rights of participation*.

In **Contemporising Custom: Re-imagining the Mari Lwyd** the author offers a genealogy of a performance tradition from Wales. However, rather than insisting on the authenticity of *This seasonal, animal head tradition ... celebrated... as a resistant, surviving legacy and... frequently described as a continuance of an 'ancient tradition'* the author insists the legitimacy of this claim is questionable. Rather he proposes *that the contemporary Mari Lwyd seen in Wales today, are unique entities, distinct from the historically recorded examples...[and] should be treated as a new form of intangible heritage, which has emerged only in the last few decades*. In effect this article provides a useful template for our understanding of several of the other case studies published herein – comprehending the evolution of the historical variants of a tradition. He reminds us that *While evolution is inevitable for a living entity, at what point do we consider a tradition to have evolved beyond the parameters of that which made it distinctive?*

These discerning questions permeate the various case studies of transmission and contemporary transformation of visual/performing arts traditions, not only in Europe but amongst African and Asian communities, whether migrant or settled, and serves to illuminate some of the myriad ways in which vibrant forms of ICH remain relevant to communal identity. In contrast to the apparent indifference of the UK Government to ICH, Korea's long historical experience of safeguarding ICH provides the backdrop to **Sokcho Saja Noreum** where the authors examine another animal-headed costume and performance tradition, one which has survived the destruction visited by the Korean War. For decades this indigenous play, performed in handmade lion masks, accompanied by bamboo flute music, at Abai Village by a refugee North Korean community, has represented the memory of a unique heritage.

The impact of another global conflict made itself felt in Africa where localised Igbo resistance to British Colonial legislation executed during World War II, led to the reinforcement of certain traditional agricultural practices among Nigeria's yam farming communities. The authors of **In Search of Honour: Eya Ebule as a Legacy of Igbo resistance** trace the history of the coercive exploitation of palm oil and cassava crops and illuminate the various strategies that peasant farming, trading and transport communities employed to counter the negative impact of these policies. The authors focus here on the local Lejja populations' collective memory of deep hunger, the region's desperate food insecurity, and the transformations which were made visible *in the declining importance of yams - the symbol of masculinity and the increasing importance of cassava*, effectively a woman's crop. A series of strategies were put into play to create a complex system of 'title-taking' to reinforce the hierarchy among renowned farmers. At the same time, higher productivity amongst yam farm labourers was encouraged through the organisation of fierce competitions to demonstrate strength and skill. Feasting on copious amounts of palm wine and a special cuisine, accompanied by traditional songs and sayings to urge them on to greater efforts, the competitors fought for the honour to wear the *Eya Ebula* (a long dwarf goat beard) on their arm.

In a shifting of the lens, another article draws our attention to the continuing complexities of communication between a colonial settler community and North American indigenous sites and spiritual practices. Detailing the complex, and not always mutually complementary history of US Federal policies *vis-à-vis* Indian sites and artefacts, **Puha po (Pilgrimage) to Kavaicuwac** evokes the rich vein of ancient knowledge which inflects the Southern Paiute *pilgrimage places and the offerings left behind ... to send their Puha across the landscape long after the pilgrim has finished...* The author's concern for participatory action research in Southern Utah reveals the ways in which the country's diverse cultural history has been shaped by competing political agendas. The author traces the traditional pilgrimage routes and practices of first peoples in this region, and analyses the interpretation of heritage sites along these routes, against the backdrop of the control of Indian heritage through policy changes and the unfavourable or indifferent interpretation of American-Indian sites. An assessment of policy implementation forms a critical component of the article.

In **Why is she naked?** the importance of women's clothing as a signifier of OvaHimba identity, similarly provides the authors with a test case to reiterate concerns about the often conflicted and ahistorical interpretation of indigenous heritage, and to articulate the need for the development of a participatory model for the selection and interpretation of the same. They advocate for the involvement of community members from the very start of the design process to guard against the typical assumptions of academia. Their focus is primarily on the capture, representation, dissemination and evaluation of the digitised image, and on co-designing technological systems. In moving from a theorisation of their process of TDM to documenting its actual implementation, the authors undertook *to evaluate the processes, impacts and outcomes of turning ICH digital and to initiate a discourse on the role of digital technologies ... in the conservation of ICH ... Their model advocates that the researchers look at digitisation holistically, and acknowledge inside actors ... as being vital for respectful, consensual and critical digitisation.*

While that project takes a microcosmic view of indigenous community safeguarding processes, the authors of **Educational Design Programmes in Spain** examine similar issues at the macro level, defining the underlying question with the intent of providing guidelines for programme design utilising heritage education for safeguarding cultural heritage. They provide an overview of exemplars of international heritage education programmes and initiatives, while at the same time emphasising Spain's experience in this field. The article provides a state of the art perspective regarding the design and implementation of heritage education programmes, as well as a good example of information management for ICH. The ultimate aim in all of this *is in raising the awareness of people and guaranteeing such unifying processes ... become part of the community's shared heritage.*

The authors of **Shared Stories** are similarly concerned with community engagement through the experiential in museum education programming. In this article they document the curating of personal narratives relating to religious experiences in museums, and in so doing offer persuasive evidence for recognising personal narratives as legitimate forms of oral heritage, using 'cybermuseumology' as an appropriate and flexible approach for capturing one museum's experience. Four different case studies drawn from the museum's experience are reviewed, where it engages with both 'experience experts' and museum visitors who talked about their memories relating to the museum objects that they had just seen. In this context the reader is encouraged to recognise their narratives as part of their 'cultural heritage' and see them as having been enriched because they are 'shared stories'. These case studies illustrate effectively the varying approaches a museum might take to engage with and inspire its audiences to reflect deeply upon different situations regarding religious beliefs, from both personal and communal perspectives. Recommendations addressed to museum professionals regarding how best to apply this new approach are constructive and encouraging, and provide guidance for approaches to both the theoretical and practical aspects of co-curatorship.

The gradual erasure of faithful observation of Christian traditions from daily life in Western Europe which was the focus of the previous article, runs in direct contrast to the way in which the invasive spread of Christianity in colonial Nigeria has been characterised in **Deities in a Changing Igbo Society**. The author maps the disruptive influence of organised religion on the traditional role of deities, and the consequent erosion of the social, legal and moral structures of post-Independence Nigerian society. *This institution that hitherto promoted peace and harmony among the people through its impartiality in administering justice and arbitration, has, in recent years, been faced with relentless attacks from organised religion—particularly from Christianity.* While at some points the article takes on the tone of a Catholic hagiography, demonstrating the power and virtues of a particular saint or, in this case, deity, the author articulates the fundamental point that *One quality which deities share with the creator God is invisibility. However, at their altars or shrines are found objects, pictures and statues which were misconstrued, misinterpreted and misrepresented by early missionaries and writers as idols, juju or fetish objects.* In this visceral denouncement of the disjuncture between traditional Igbo belief systems and the imposition of new foreign religious and legal systems, the author explores the dismembered landscape of violated laws and morals, broken promises and vows, which has evolved in the decades following Independence, and concludes that despite efforts to break the hold of these deities, they still reign in power in Nsukka.

In the same way that the preceding chapter exposed the vulnerability of traditional legal practices and belief systems, the authors of a brief article, **Panaad and the Paril**, have also revealed an unusual link between spiritual practices and a traditional farming system in Cebu, the Philippines. The authors document a *distinctive native farming tradition that involves terracing the hillsides. Farmers have used parils (stone walls) to create additional arable land for agricultural production in Barangay Tabayag in the uplands of Argao.* The authors' report on fast disappearing knowledge about the construction and conservation of the *paril* also reveals the intricacies of associated land ownership, supported by a unique form of land inheritance to the youngest son. This article makes an important contribution to safeguarding traditions of land management and the sustainability of an indigenous form of water and soil conservation.

The authors of **Grandfather Tree** similarly address both local experiences and global perspectives regarding nature as ICH, and the importance of understanding cultural difference in order to appropriately propose and implement cultural and/or environmental policy. They address the longstanding dissociation between indigenous knowledge and contemporary societal concerns, problematised by a continual process *of colonial settler encroachment on, and cultural diminishment of, the Ute peoples who are the aboriginal inhabitants of the entire Colorado region,* and attempts to re/locate those sites within the broader discourse of settler colonial ideologies and contemporary politics. Tensions arising out of the memory/history divide of an extensive history of contact led to an assumption of authority without adequate or appropriate consultation with the community concerned. Events abruptly descended into mutual misunderstandings of the intrinsic, intangible heritage, and led to the fatal dismemberment of a family member, the Grandfather Tree, and the loss of precious living heritage.

While several of the preceding articles reference the utility of local languages, the author of **Tide and Time: Korean Fishermen and Multtae** focuses on the minutiae of the language of Korean fishermen for different events during the 15 day tidal cycle between the full moon and new moon. This very thorough study, documenting traditional knowledge normally transmitted orally to younger generations, goes into great depth to explain how the tidal cycle influences, if not determines, the schedule of daily and monthly routines for both the fishermen at sea and their families at home in Gomsu Bay. Close observation of natural phenomena and an intimate understanding of how tides and timing even affect the quality and quantity of the catch they bring home, moves the nuances of both the actions and the language employed beyond the scope of traditional knowledge into the realm of a unique cognitive system of tidal fluctuations.

More than half of the contributions in this volume actively address the broad thematic sweep of nature-culture which has been, and continues to be, interrogated on many platforms and media. **Frugal Innovation**, authored by two development specialists, is similarly preoccupied. It takes a unique approach which is not so much supporting safeguarding as it is about advocating for creative contemporary applications of *knowledge of nature and the universe with a focus on 'Sustainable Development'*, to legitimise and leverage ICH-related frugal innovations, as well as to ensure that this transformation is fair and collectively beneficial. The paper therefore proposes an innovative interpretation of the 2003 *Convention* through two case studies which explore the potentiality for the integration of 'Frugal innovation' based on indigenous knowledge and practices derived from ICH, into the framework of the 2003 *Convention*. These newly created commercial products or processes draw inspiration from ICH. This manuscript offers a convincing evocation of the interconnection between intangible cultural heritage and 'intuitive' invention, and thus the interrelationship between aspects of both the 2003 and 2005 *Conventions*, arguing persuasively for the utilisation of ICH as a generator of frugal innovation as a resource and inspiration for economic development.

The enthusiasm which infuses the previous offering's support for the commodification of cultural practice is much more tempered in tone in **Taste-Power-Tradition** – which continues this volume's interrogation of the nature/culture connection with our review of this *European quality system* [which] *has been the subject of an extensive multidisciplinary and multinational research project*. In this fascinating and insightful compilation of case studies, examining the idea of origin in terms of space and culture as a special indicator of quality, one is aware of a much more measured approach. As our reviewer explains *its all about the power to define borders and zones of inclusion and exclusion, about money, about increasing profit margins, about elevating agricultural products above the level of ordinary staple food or commodities. If one thing becomes clear, it is that there is no such thing as simple attribution of geographical labels. It is all a matter of dealing, negotiating, and careful manoeuvring*. The complex relationship of power and culture, as established with this instrument, allows for the declaration of specialities, qualified by their tradition, and typified by their region, to protect these products as both intellectual and collective property. Our reviewer has indicated that while it may not be ICH, it is recommended if not required reading for those involved in the safeguarding and promoting of culinary heritage.

Government agencies and non-governmental organisations are increasingly being held to account for greater transparency and to recognise the multivalence of heritage for diverse communities and stakeholders. Scholars working in 'memory' and heritage contexts have been revealing the fields of power in which heritage is used to both perpetuate and resist social inequalities. In so doing both practitioners and professionals alike are challenging traditional models with co-curatorial practices that reflect the needs, interests, and values of communities, particularly those who have historically been marginalised and effaced. The growing body of critical heritage studies not only interrogates the systems of power implicated in heritage practices, but also demonstrates the potential for deploying tangible and intangible heritage to address historical and systemic inequalities as a social activist strategy. In this context, the *Journal* is providing a timely platform, with authors from several countries coming together to share their views and discuss the overall issue of heritage and human rights through a variety of lenses. Through the works published in Volume 13 we are encouraging a cross-cultural conversation to help democratise the processes of community engagement and keep the momentum going for the promotion and interpretation of humanity's intangible heritage in the next decade of the twenty-first century.

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